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MACON TELEGRAPH (GA)
13 June 1985

Phony psychologist gets probation

An Atlanta man who pleaded guilty last week to practicing medicine without a license may serve his five-year sentence on probation, a judge ruled Wednesday.

Marshall Handon, 47, pretended to be a psychologist for about a year in a downtown Macon clinic and sold tranquilizers to undercover agents in October.

Bibb County Superior Court Judge C. Cloud Morgan also ordered Handon to pay a \$5,000 fine and reimburse the county for \$225 the undercover agents paid him for three office visits.

A second charge of distributing a mild sedative was dropped in exchange for his guilty plea, prosecutor Robin Odom said. Odom said after Wednesday's hearing that she believes the sentence is fair.

Handon said he gave the drugs to an undercover agent only after she insisted.

Handon, who claimed the CIA recruited him in the 1960s for covert work and gave him a bogus psychology degree, said he continued to pose as a psychologist even after leaving the CIA during the Watergate scandal.

The clinic, owned by Dr. Joseph R. Phillips of Decatur, closed about two months ago.

— Lance McKerley